



Identifying & Responding to Human Trafficking Survivors

Topics Covered:

- ❖ Learn how to identify victims who may be already part of your ministries and/or social services programs
- ❖ Learn rapid screening questions to integrate in your conversations and/or intakes
- ❖ How to respond if you have or think you've identified a human trafficking victim



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In Their Shoes: Understanding Victims' Mindset

Imagine trying to cope with all of this at once...

- All of your identification taken away
- Having to change your name
- Constantly moving wherever someone else wants to
- Being kidnapped
- Being raped, repeatedly
- Being beaten for not making enough money
- Having to give all the money you make away
- Having threats made against your family
- Having to completely change your appearance
- Getting a tattoo on your neck of the name of the person who constantly abuses you
- Being constantly threatened with violence
- Living with a group of people you call “family” who you could never depend on for support
- Feeling trapped in an abusive and violent situation



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- Not being allowed any contact with the world outside of your abusive situation
- Not being able to make eye contact with men other than the one who abuses you
- Having to call a man who is not your father, who abuses you, “daddy”
- Being punished and beaten when someone else breaks an abuser’s “rules”
- Having to meet a nightly quota based on how much money you make for having sex
- Having to compete for attention from your from your abuser with five other girls
- Having sex with strangers every night
- Getting an STD
- Getting arrested again and again
- Having to trade sex with a police officer in exchange for not getting arrested
- Being beat up by a group of 5 pimps for looking one in the eye



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Debt bondage

Traffickers create inflated debts that victims cannot realistically pay off. These debts are often combined with accruing interest or small fees to ensure that the victim stays in the debt situation.

Traumatic bonding to the trafficker

In many trafficking cases, victims have exhibited commonly-known behaviors of traumatic bonding due to the violence and psychological abuse (a.k.a., Stockholm syndrome).

Language and social barriers

Feelings of unfamiliarity or fear of the unknown provide obstacles to leaving a trafficking situation. These feelings are exacerbated by language and social barriers.

Distrust of law enforcement or service providers

In many cases, traffickers are known to brainwash victims into a false distrust of law enforcement, government officials, and service providers. Victims also may have had negative past experiences with institutional systems, which also impact trust levels.

Isolation

Traffickers purposefully isolate victims from a positive support structure and foster controlled environments where the victim is kept in a state of complete dependency. High levels of dependency and learned helplessness often lead victims to stay in their situation rather than face the uncertain path of leaving.

False promises

Traffickers use sophisticated methods of manipulating the human desire to hope through false promises and lies about a future better life. Victims who are children are especially vulnerable to these false promises.

Hopelessness and resignation

In the face of extreme control, violence, and captivity, notions of hope may fade over time towards states of hopelessness and resignation.

Facilitated drug addiction

In certain trafficking networks, traffickers provide addictive substances to their victims to foster longer-term drug addiction and monetary dependency.

Lack of awareness of available resources

Victims may not leave a situation due to a lack of awareness of any resources or services designed to help them. Traffickers purposefully control the information that victims receive.

Psychological trauma

Many trafficking victims experience significant levels of psychological trauma due to the levels of abuse they have endured. In certain cases, this trauma leads to disassociation, depression, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which in turn affects daily functioning and levels of agency.

Low levels of self-identifying as trafficking victims

The majority of trafficking victims do not self-identify as victims of human trafficking. They may be unaware of the elements of the crime or the Federal criminal paradigm designed to protect them.

Normalization of exploitation

Over a long period of enduring severe levels of trauma, physical abuse, and psychological manipulation, victims demonstrate resilience strategies and defense mechanisms that normalize the abuse in their minds. In a relative mental assessment, what once may have been viewed as abuse may now be experienced as a normal part of everyday life. This changing “lens” on viewing the world impacts the ability to self-identify as a victim.

Captivity/Confinement

Past examples have included victims being locked indoors, held in guarded compounds, or locked in trunks of cars.

Frequent accompaniment/guarded

In many trafficking networks, victims' public interactions are mediated, monitored, or entirely controlled. In certain severe cases, victims have been controlled by armed guards.

Use and threat of violence

Severe physical retaliation (e.g., beatings, rape, sexual assault, torture) are combined with threats to hold victims in a constant state of fear and obedience.

Use of reprisals and threats of reprisals against loved ones or third parties

Traffickers target reprisals at children, parents, siblings, and friends, or other trafficking victims.

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Fear

Fear manifests in many ways in a trafficking situation, including fear of physical retaliation, of death, of arrest, or of harm to one's loved ones.

Shame

Victims from all cultures and in both sex and labor cases may be profoundly ashamed about the activities they have been forced to perform. Self-blame links closely to low self-esteem.

Self-blame

In the face of an extremely psychologically manipulative situation, trafficked persons may engage in self-blaming attitudes and blame themselves for being duped into a situation beyond their control. Self-blaming attitudes are often reinforced by the traffickers and can serve to impede the victim from testifying against or faulting the trafficker.

How to Recognize Human Trafficking in your Corps/Programs – The “Red Flags”

- Evidence of being controlled (rarely alone, seems to be under constant surveillance, isolated or cut off from family and friends, bruises, fear of speaking for themselves.
- Evidence of inability to move or leave a job.
- Persistent fear, depression, anxiety, or submissive or stupor-like behavior (signs of trauma.)
- No passport or other identifying documentation.
- Excessive work hours - not free to take time off.
- Unpaid for work completed or paid very little.
- Lives with co-workers and “employer”- no privacy.
- Untreated illnesses and infections.
- Active in commercial sex industry or works “off the books” in low-paying job.

Lack of Identification

- Despite the increased efforts in recent years to raise awareness of trafficking enhance protections and services to trafficking victims, they remain largely hidden and reluctant to come forward.
 1. Victims are Isolated
 2. Victims lack information
 3. Victims are intimidated
 4. Victims are physically threatened and abused
 5. Lack of social services provider's skills in victim service identification

(Rescue and Restore, HHS, "Look beneath the Surface" question card. Publication funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. (2003).)

Integrate rapid screening questions into your intake process:

- **Are you in a personal or work relationship with a person who physically harms or threatens you?**
- **Have you been hurt while working on the job either by someone you work for or with?**
- Have you ever exchanged or been forced to exchange sex for money, food, clothing, housing, drugs, safety or anything else of value?
- Has your partner, ex-partner, family member or other person ever forced you to engage in a sexual activity against your will?
- Are you afraid of your partner or afraid to go home? Are you afraid for your safety?



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Additional screening questions for staff to be aware of:

- What type of work do they do?
- Are they being paid?
- Can they leave their job if they wanted?
- Do they have freedom to come and go as they please?
- Have they been threatened with harm if they attempt to leave?
- Can they freely contact family and friends?
- Were they coached on what to say to law enforcement?
- What are their living conditions like?
- Have they been deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care or other life necessities?
- Are there locks on the doors/windows so you cannot get out?
- Has your identification or documentation been taken from you?



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Observations during interview with potential victim:

- Is the potential victim accompanied by another person who seems controlling?
- Does the person accompanying the potential victim insist on giving information to providers?
- Can you see or detect any physical abuse?
- Does the potential victim seem submissive or fearful?
- Does the potential victim have difficulty communicating because of language or cultural barriers?
- Does the potential victim have any identification?



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If they answer yes to any of those questions:

Communicate messages of hope:

- You have rights.
- You are not alone and not to blame.
- You are entitled to services and help.
- We are here to help you.



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If they answer yes to any of those questions:

Things to Avoid:

- Do not ask about the person's immigration status
- Do not make promises you can't keep
- Do not contact authorities without the person's permission



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If they answer yes to any of those questions:

Assess safety:

- Are you afraid to go home?
- What would happen if you didn't return to your work site/residence this evening?



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If they answer yes to any of those questions:

Next Steps:

- If the person is in a medical emergency, call 911
- Call the 24-hour operating National Human Trafficking Hotline: 888-3737-888,
- or he/she can text INFO or HELP to: BeFree:233733. This hotline can guide you through the process of connecting the person to safety and resources.
- SA Justice is here to support at all times – we realize this can be complex and challenging work. Please feel free to contact:

Priscilla Santos, MA

Territorial Anti-Trafficking Initiatives Coordinator

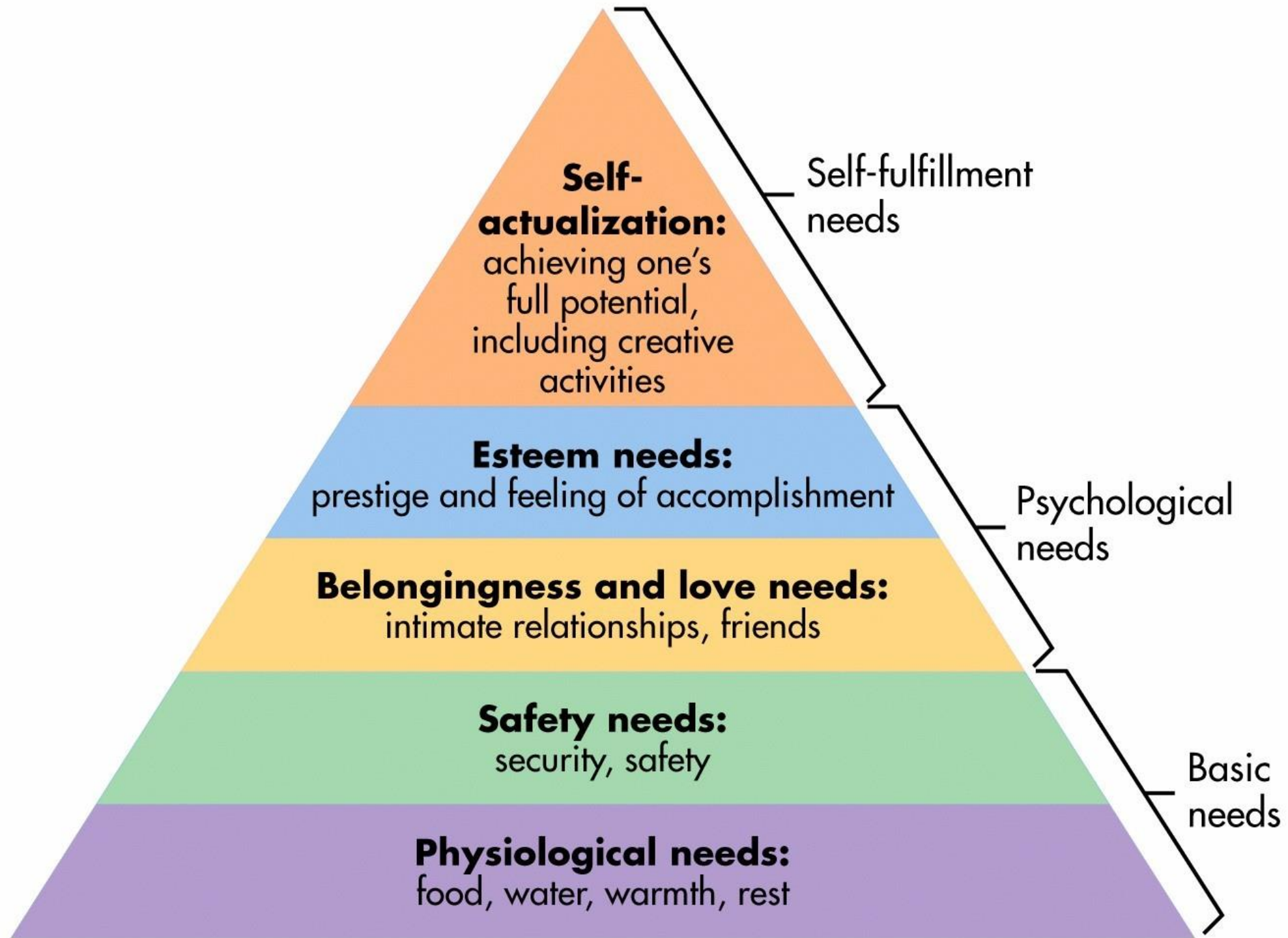
The Salvation Army Social Justice Department

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Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Importance of Language

- Victim vs. Survivor vs. Client
 - “It is helpful for the victim’s recovery to refer to victims of trafficking as survivors or clients.”
 - When speaking directly with a client, call them by their name or asked what they would like to be called.
 - Reframe from using nicknames.
 - Reframe from calling victims “my girls.”
- *Psychosocial Notebook: Psychosocial Support to Groups of Victims of Human Trafficking in Transit Situations. International Organization for Migration. Vol. 4. 2004. p. 14.*

Key Guidelines When Serving Survivors

- ❖ Be Teachable.
- ❖ Collaboration.
- ❖ Treating Survivors with dignity & respect.
- ❖ Empathy, compassion.
- ❖ Do no harm.
- ❖ Individualized treatment and care.
- ❖ Continuing and holistic care.
- ❖ Victim interviews and informed consent.
- ❖ Security Issues.
- ❖ Intake procedure.
- ❖ Spiritual care.
- ❖ Proper trained staff.
- ❖ Non-discrimination.
- ❖ Confidentiality and right to privacy.
- ❖ Participation & Empowerment

*(The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking)
(Hands that Heal)*



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Special Needs of Trafficking Victims in Non-Specific HT Shelters (Homeless, Domestic Violence)

- Length of stay
- Mental Health/Trauma
- Participation in the center's activities
- Interpretation needs
- Providing services to minors
- More intensive case management
- Providing services to boys and men
- Housing multiple victims at one time
- Cooperation with law enforcement
- Criminal Culpability of victims of trafficking
- Reaching out to ethnic communities
- Establishing network with additional service providers
- Media Attention
- Safety planning
- Flexibility with rules

(The Salvation Trafficking Anti-Trafficking Training Manual)



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Referral

- A variety of methods should be utilized to identify and refer victims of human trafficking to the shelter. In addition to referrals by police, other measures such as hotlines and outreach work should be created by the shelter or partners in order to secure the identification and referral of victims.



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Other Shelter/Housing Best Practices

- Orientation to shelter, neighborhood & community
- Introduction to staff and other residents
- Explanation of rules and expectations
- Shared Rules and Values, made by residents
- Community dinners
- In-house life-skills workshops
- Being there is a choice!



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